United Nations S/2015/256

Security Council

Distr.: General
17 April 2015

Original: English

Letter dated 15 April 2015 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit a copy of a letter dated 30 March 2015 from the Secretary-General of the Frente Polisario, Mohamed Abdelaziz, on the situation concerning Western Sahara (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kingsley **Mamabolo**
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of the Republic of South Africa

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Annex to the letter dated 15 April 2015 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic]

As you prepare your report concerning Western Sahara, which is to be presented to the Security Council in April, and following the visits that your Personal Envoy for Western Sahara, Mr. Christopher Ross, made to the region this year, we should like to draw urgently your attention to the following:

- In your last report to the Security Council, dated April 2014, you presented the parties to the conflict and the rest of the world with a comprehensive overview of the legal and political status of the Western Sahara conflict, and the progress of United Nations efforts, with a commitment to making April 2015 a time to review and re-evaluate the situation and to develop a new approach to overcome the current impasse.

- However, instead of making the necessary progress towards ending this prolonged conflict in a manner that would preserve the prestige and credibility of the United Nations, the Kingdom of Morocco chose to persist in its intransigence and disruptive policies. It adamantly refused to meet your Personal Envoy and prevented your Special Representative from assuming her duties, thus bringing United Nations efforts to a standstill for nearly 10 months and compounding the nearly 24-year-long suffering of the Sahrawi people, which has been waiting for the United Nations to fulfil its commitment of organizing a referendum on self-determination.

- In that context, the speech that the King of Morocco made on 6 November 2014 to mark the 39th anniversary of his country's occupation of Western Sahara was a message to the United Nations and the international community. Incorporating the language of rejection, intransigence, threats, intimidation and disdain, the speech was a declaration by Morocco that it would embark on another round of violations of international law and international humanitarian law in Western Sahara.

- The Frente Polisario reiterates its strong condemnation of the delay in reaching a solution to the conflict caused by the continuing procrastination of Morocco and reaffirms the responsibility of the United Nations to address this defiance and deliberate obstruction.

- We call on you to take practical, tangible measures against the obstructing party, which must be held accountable. It would be an incomprehensible and unjustifiable irony if, instead being duly punished, the party that has obstructed and stalled is rewarded for its intransigence, as would be the case if the fundamental elements that define the conflict were to be abandoned, including decolonization, the right to self-determination, the protection of human rights and ending the plundering of natural resources in a non-self-governing territory, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, Chapter XI, Article 73.

- In that connection, we express our great concern regarding the strange interpretation by Morocco of your telephone call with the King of Morocco. This interpretation gives the impression that, in preparing your report, you

would not address any issue that could even remotely "provoke" Morocco, the occupying State, even if doing would be completely inappropriate given the nature of the conflict and contrary to the Charter of the United Nations.

- The Frente Polisario affirms that any such move would threaten to destroy the whole process and that the Frente Polisario would not accept it, since it would only solidify the impasse, with all its attendant risks. It would also reward and encourage the intransigent party, which has hampered all efforts aimed at implementing international resolutions on Western Sahara, despite arduous international efforts and 13 rounds of negotiations.

- The Frente Polisario furthermore affirms that the current situation, which has dangerous repercussions, along with the worrisome developments in the region and in the world, requires the United Nations to assume full responsibility and take urgent measures to save the process by clearly emphasizing the nature of the conflict and its legal framework. It must also compel the intransigent party to comply with the international resolutions and contribute seriously to reaching a just and definitive solution that guarantees the right of the Sahrawi people to self-determination.

- We call on you to stop the gross violations of the rights of the Sahrawi people being committed by Morocco, the occupying State, including securing the release Saharawi political prisoners, first and foremost the detainees of Gdim Izik, who were victims of a military trial; removing the occupation wall; ending the plundering of Sahrawi natural resources; and establishing a United Nations mechanism capable of protecting human rights in Western Sahara and monitoring and reporting on the situation thereof.

- The Frente Polisario recalls that the Organization of African Unity/African Union is the partner of the United Nations in the African Union-United Nations Settlement Proposals. It is therefore not logical to ignore the position of the African Union on one of the last decolonization issues in the continent, particularly since the African Union is the main partner of the United Nations in all the conflicts facing the continent today.

- The Frente Polisario, which remains ready to cooperate seriously and constructively with the United Nations for the decolonization of Western Sahara, cannot be a party in any way, whether now or in the future, to a solution that fails to respect the core legal principles that frame the conflict. The Frente Polisario emphasizes that the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) is unequivocally specified in its name. The role of MINURSO cannot be limited to monitoring the ceasefire, as that is only a single step in a process that should end with the implementation of its primary mandate, namely, organizing a referendum in which the Sahrawi people can exercise their right to self-determination.

I should be grateful if you would convey the substance of this letter to the distinguished members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohamed **Abdelaziz**
Secretary-General of the Frente Polisario